

TITLE 1600 - INFORMATION SERVICES

1650 - News Media.1650.4 - News Releases. Black Hills National Forest.1. Responsibility.

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a. Ranger Districts. District Rangers have authority and responsibility for issuing news releases concerning activities on their districts. They are also responsible for preparing Forest-wide news releases after consulting and coordinating with other District Rangers, Forest staff, and others who might have relevant information. The draft of the release shall be written in the required format and forwarded to the Staff Officer having staff responsibility for the subject matter area 2 weeks prior to the mailing date. The Staff Officer will review the draft for compliance with law, regulation, policy, and management direction. The Staff Officer will edit for comprehension, length and coordination with other releases, and prepare the release in the final approved format, submit to the Forest Supervisor for approval, and distribute to the media. All releases, especially to the print media, will be made so that it will appear in the weekly newspapers on the same day as it appears in the daily newspaper. Mail releases to weekly newspapers on Friday and to the daily newspapers and television/radio media on the following Tuesday.

If two or more districts are involved in a project, the appropriate Staff Officer is responsible for coordinating news coverage.

Each District Ranger will keep district files of (1) news releases he/she issues, and (2) clippings from local papers which are pertinent to the Forest. Copies of both are to be forwarded promptly to the Staff Officers' secretary. Notification about a major concern or controversy shall be made promptly by telephone to the Forest Supervisor.

The District Rangers are also responsible for establishing working relationships with news media in their local area. "Local area" is defined as follows:

Bearlodge Ranger District - Sundance, Gillette, Casper and Newcastle

Custer Ranger District - Custer, Hill City, Hot Springs and Edgemont

Elk Mountain Ranger District - Newcastle, Sundance, Gillette, Casper and Edgemont

Harney Ranger District - Custer, Hill City and Rapid City

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Nemo Ranger District - Deadwood, Lead, Rapid City and Sturgis

Pactola Ranger District - Rapid City, Hill City and Keystone

Spearfish Ranger District - Spearfish, Belle Fourche, Sundance,
Deadwood and Lead

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The Rapid City Journal and KEVN and KOTA TV are the major daily news sources for the Black Hills area. Each District Ranger and Staff Officer should develop a relationship with these three media sources.

b. Boxelder Civilian Conservation Center. The Center Director has authority and responsibility for issuing news releases about Center activities to local news media (Rapid City, Sturgis and Lead/Deadwood) and to hometown papers of Corpsmembers involved in Job Corps programs.

The Center Director will keep files of (1) news releases he/she issues, and (2) clippings from local papers which are pertinent to the Center. Copies of both are to be forwarded promptly to the Staff Officers' secretary. Notification about a major concern or controversy shall be made promptly by telephone to the Forest Supervisor.

c. Supervisor's Office. Preparation of news releases dealing with Forest policy or with matters of Forest-wide interest or concern are the responsibility of the Forest Supervisor and his staff, who are also responsible for coordination with appropriate District Rangers.

2. Format for News Releases. The following standards for preparation of news releases have been developed after a review of the Associated Press Stylebook and various reference works on proper journalistic usage and practice. These standards will be followed by District Rangers, Center Director, and the Staff Officers.

a. double space;

b. list a "contact" person and his or her phone number at upper right-hand corner of first page;

c. write a headline for your story -- it may prevent editorial misinterpretation;

d. indent each paragraph five spaces;

e. leave margins of at least 1½ inches on each side of the page;

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- f. use only one side of the page;
- g. do not distribute carbon copies; send out only originals or machine copies;
- h. if a news release is to be continued on the following page, type "more" in the middle of the bottom line of the first page;
- i. end each page with a paragraph; don't break a paragraph or sentence and continue it onto the next page;
- j. if the release is more than one page in length, put the page number and a brief two or three word description of the news release topic at the top of each page; do not number the first page;
- k. at the end of the news release, type "###;" -30
- l. make no errors; proofread carefully, then have someone else proofread the news release before it is distributed; and
- m. internal distribution should be made the day before the release is distributed to the news media.

Advice and counseling on preparation of news releases and other written materials and on news media relations is available on request from the Staff Officer.

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The S.O. Receptionist will maintain a current mailing list of area news media and provide copies of this list to each District Ranger and the Center Director upon request.

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